

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-27 (canceled)

28. (New) A storage compartment comprising a container defining an access aperture closable by a closure that can be sealed to the container around the aperture and that can be opened by relative movement between the container and the closure in a lateral direction with respect to the aperture, the container having a first sealing loop around the aperture and the closure having a second sealing loop co-operable by alignment with the first sealing loop to maintain a seal when the closure closes the aperture, the sealing loops being moved into and out of mutual alignment by the relative lateral movement between the container and the closure, wherein:

at least one of the sealing loops comprises a resiliently flexible seal that includes means for magnetic attraction to the other sealing loop and biases said means away from the other sealing loop; and

mutual alignment of the sealing loops effects a seal in use by increasing aggregate magnetic attraction between the sealing loops to overcome said bias of the resiliently flexible seal.

29. (New) The compartment of claim 28, wherein the relative lateral movement between the container and the closure causes sliding contact between the sealing loops.

30. (New) The compartment of claim 28, wherein the sealing loops are substantially planar.

31. (New) The compartment of claim 30, wherein a minor portion of at least one of the sealing loops is out of the plane of the remainder of that loop.

32. (New) The compartment of claim 30, wherein the sealing loops move in substantially parallel planes.

33. (New) The compartment of claim 30, wherein the sealing loops are substantially coplanar.

34. (New) The compartment of claim 28, wherein the sealing loops comprise sections transverse to the direction of movement and sections aligned with the direction of movement.

35. (New) The compartment of claim 34, wherein the sections of the sealing loops transverse to the direction of movement and aligned with the direction of movement are substantially straight.

36. (New) The compartment of claim 35, wherein the sealing loops are generally rectangular and define front and rear sections and two side sections connected successively by corners.

37. (New) The compartment of claim 28, wherein the sealing loops are continuous.

38. (New) The compartment of claim 28, wherein both sealing loops include magnetic means.

39. (New) The compartment of claim 28, wherein one of the sealing loops includes magnetic means and the other of the sealing loops includes material that can be attracted to the magnetic means.

40. (New) The compartment of claim 28, wherein the resiliently flexible seal is an elongate member defining generally parallel ridges separated by a web wherein the ridges maintain clearance between the web and a cooperating sealing surface in use.

41. (New) The compartment of claim 40, wherein a magnetic or magnetically attractive strip extends along the web to press the ridges into sealing contact with the cooperating sealing surface in use.

42. (New) The compartment of claim 28 and including anti-magnetic flux means associated with magnetic means of a sealing loop.

43. (New) The compartment of claim 28, further comprising a trace heater associated with at least one of the sealing loops.

44. (New) The compartment of claim 43, wherein the trace heater applies heat directly to the at least one of the sealing loops.

45. (New) The compartment of claim 44, wherein the trace heater is within the seal.

46. (New) The compartment of claim 44, wherein the trace heater applies heat to an outboard side of the seal.

47. (New) The compartment of claim 28, wherein the resiliently flexible seal is mounted to a removable relatively rigid frame that can be fixed to the container or to the closure.

48. (New) The compartment of claim 28, further comprising an insulating barrier inboard of at least one of the sealing loops.

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49. (New) The compartment of claim 48, wherein the insulating barrier is configured to maintain substantially all of the associated sealing loop above zero Celsius when the container is used for frozen storage.

50. (New) The compartment of claim 28, wherein the sealing loops are rectangular and wherein the container or the closure are substantially rectangular and have rounded bulbous corners.

51. (New) The compartment of claim 45, wherein the trace heater applies heat to an outboard side of the seal.